



Dominic College

Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures

RATIONALE

Dignity, equity and justice in relationships between all people within the Dominic College community are of fundamental importance. The College has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times, and that grievances are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation and Archdiocese of Hobart requirements.

Grievances occur when a staff member, parent or student complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) at the College that he/she believes to be in breach of a relevant Act, Regulation or Order infringes upon the principles of merit or equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.

Dominic College recognises the right of staff, parents and students to register a complaint or grievance about any decision, behaviour, act or omission that they feel is unfair, discriminatory or unjustified.

Undisclosed or unresolved grievances create distress and can be a violation of a person's rights. Resolution of grievances at the local level, where appropriate, is the desired outcome. The College has developed a Communication Protocol to encourage and support quick and effective resolution of queries and complaints.

Dominic College is an independent Catholic School in the Salesian tradition, its governance is with the Salesians of Don Bosco, not the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office. The Department of Education does not deal with complaints concerning Catholic Schools.

Principles and implementation of managing grievances

1. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
2. Everyone is made aware of the College Communication Protocol.
3. Everyone is made aware of and has access to the College Grievance Policy and Procedures.
4. It is the Principal's responsibility to provide a healthy and positive school environment that is free from grievances such as discrimination and harassment. In doing so, all staff, parents and students will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities, including their right to have grievances resolved.
5. Staff, parents and students may choose to resolve grievances personally by talking with, or writing to, the person/s whose behaviour is of concern.
6. Staff, parents and students may choose to seek assistance, including assistance from the Principal. In such circumstances, the Principal may use local complaints resolution procedures, including private discussions, mediation, monitoring or counselling.
7. It is incumbent upon the Principal to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to her/his attention. The Principal will exercise her/his judgement as to whether or not she/he will act upon anonymous complaints.
8. If a complaint is made against a person, either verbally or in writing, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and have the right to respond.
9. Staff, parents and students are encouraged to lodge formal complaints in serious cases or when unwelcome behaviour persists despite advice to a respondent that his/her behaviour is causing problems and must cease.
10. Formal complaints of a serious nature should be lodged in writing to the Principal.
11. All formal complaints, discussions, ensuing procedures and outcomes will be fully documented. Discussions of complaints are confidential.
12. A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal will also be in writing.

13. The rights of complainants and respondents are upheld at all times, including the use of fair, confidential, impartial and dignified resolution procedures. No one will be victimised as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
14. Complaints will be received and managed in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Bias, prejudice, personal feelings and beliefs, and pressure to conceal information in order to protect the reputation of parties involved will not be tolerated.
15. Any party to a dispute has the right to be accompanied by another person, in a support role, at any meetings convened to discuss resolution of the grievance.
16. If a formal written complaint about a serious matter is not satisfactorily resolved in collaboration with and after meeting the Principal, or through a mediation process established by the Principal, a complainant may then lodge his/her complaint in writing, to the Salesian Provincial, who is chair of the Governing Council.
17. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
18. If, after this process, matters still remain unresolved for the complainant, they have the right to seek arbitration through courts, ombudsman, legal representation or other government commissions such as the Human Rights Commission, etc. These may entail some financial costs for the complainant seeking arbitration.

Procedures

The College is committed to grievance procedures that reflect the values of the College and the integrity of each individual who interacts with the College. Central to this is the College's commitment to making mediation available for parties at all stages of the grievance process. The Dominic College Grievance Procedures contain five sections:

1. Parent, Carer or Guardian Grievance Procedure
2. Student Grievance Procedure
3. Staff Grievance Procedure
4. Member of the Public Grievance Procedure
5. Grievance Procedure for Complaints about the Principal

1. PARENT, CARER AND GUARDIAN GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

At Dominic College we believe that the relationship between the home and school is a very important part of ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. We recognise that parents and teachers need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for their children. We encourage parents or guardians (parents) to discuss their child's progress with teachers and to let the College know if there are any concerns or a specific grievance. This will enable the College and parents to work together to resolve the grievance as promptly and effectively as possible.

What to do if you have a grievance:

- Try to identify the problem or issue clearly before contacting the College. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the College.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or complaint. This will help in finding a solution. You are encouraged to use the **College Complaint Form** at any time, especially at the beginning of seeking assistance with your complaint. A support person can assist you to complete the form.
- If appropriate make an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher or pastoral care teacher in the first instance. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone call or meeting. K-6 class teachers, 7-10 pastoral care teachers and 7-10 House Coordinators can be contacted by name via email using the staff member's first initial - gbrown@dominic.tas.edu.au
- Please endeavour to stay calm when discussing your concern. Even if you do not feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you to advocate on your behalf.
- Please be assured that staff are committed to resolving any issues that parents might have regarding students and will discuss with you actions that might be taken in regard to your concern.
- If you do not feel after your meeting that the matter has been resolved please make arrangements to meet with the Coordinator of Pastoral Care K-6 or 7-10 (if a pastoral matter) or the Coordinator of Teaching & Learning K-2/3-6 or 7-10 (if an academic matter).
- If you do not feel after your meeting that the matter has been resolved and if you have a complaint about one or more staff members, please make arrangements to meet with the Director of Pastoral Care K-10 (if a pastoral matter) or the Director of Teaching & Learning K-10 (if an academic matter).
- If you do not feel after your meeting that the matter has been resolved, please make arrangements to meet with the Deputy Principal.
- If your complaint is about a matter within the Sports Program, you should directly contact either the Coordinator of Sport K-6 or the Coordinator of Sport 7-10.
- If you do not feel after your meeting with the Coordinator of Sport that the matter has been resolved, please make arrangements to meet with the Director of Pastoral Care K-10 and the Deputy Principal.
- If after meeting with the Deputy Principal you still do not feel that the matter has been resolved or if your complaint is about a very serious matter, please refer your complaint to the Principal.
- The College Principal will meet with you.
- Please be assured that mediation is available at all stages of the Dominic College grievance process. Mediation can be arranged by contacting the Principal.
- If meeting with the Principal does not resolve the issue or if your complaint is about a particularly serious or sensitive matter, please refer your complaint to the Chairman of the Dominic College Council. Contact details can be obtained by phoning the Principal's Personal Assistant for current phone or email details.
- The Chairman of the Dominic College Council will contact you.

- If the matter has still not been resolved after communications with the Chairman of the Dominic College Council, please refer your complaint to the Salesian Provincial, who is chair of the Governing Council. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions such as Human Rights Commission for example. Please be aware that such avenues might entail some financial cost to your family.

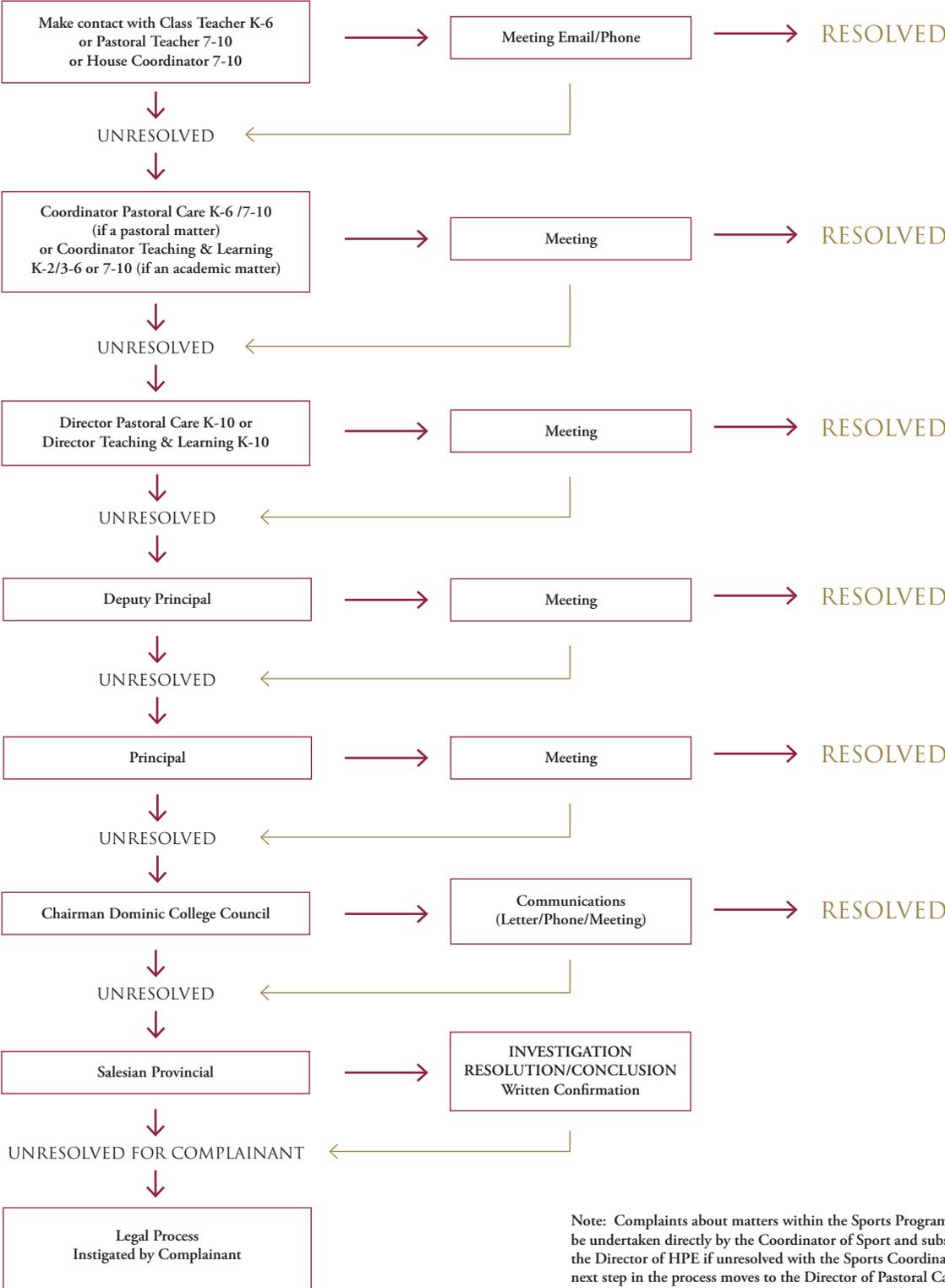
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WHEN YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT

- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and have the right to respond.
- Discussions of complaints are confidential and all grievance procedures will comply with National Privacy Legislation.
- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing. The College Complaint Form can be used if it is helpful.
- All complaints, the actions taken to resolve them and outcomes of those actions will be fully documented.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal should also be in writing.
- No one will be victimized as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
- At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person.
- A process of mediation is available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions.

1. PARENT, CARER AND GUARDIAN GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.



Note: Complaints about matters within the Sports Program should be undertaken directly by the Coordinator of Sport and subsequently the Director of HPE if unresolved with the Sports Coordinator. The next step in the process moves to the Director of Pastoral Care K-10.

2. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

At Dominic College we believe that it is important that everyone feels happy and safe at school so that the best learning can take place. We believe that staff and students need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for each student. If you have a problem, a concern or a complaint, we encourage you to speak to someone about it and we have provided some steps that you might work through to help you do this.

What to do if you have a problem (a grievance):

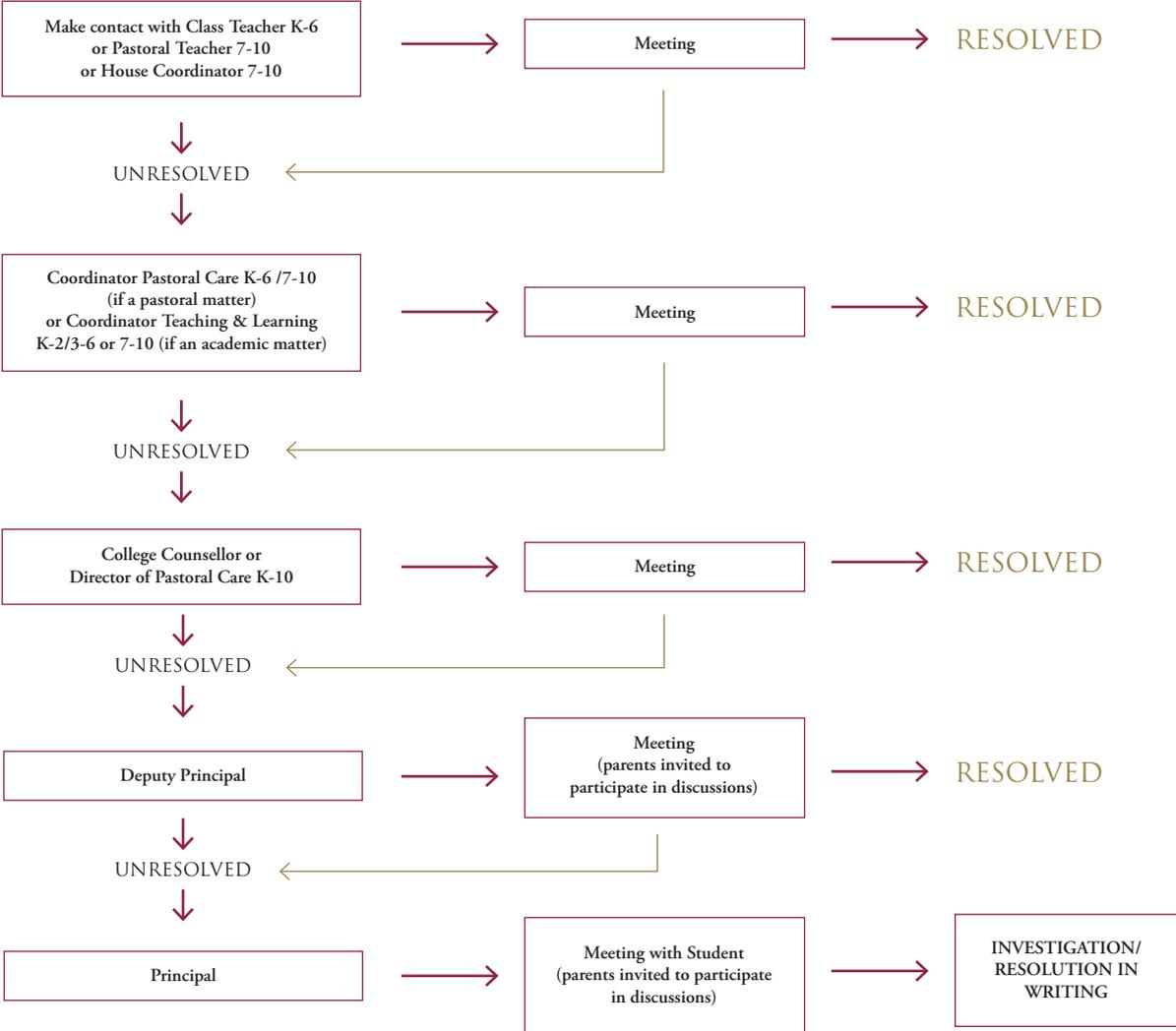
- Try to identify the problem that is upsetting you. If there is more than one problem, list them so that you are clear about what you feel or need.
- If you feel you can, talk to the person you are having the problem with and if their behaviour is upsetting you, tell them to stop.
- Often parents or guardians can help if you are unsure of what to do. It is a good idea to ask for support and advice when problems arise. Keeping it to yourself will not make the problem go away and often will make it worse.
- If your talk with the person you are having the problem with does not solve your problem, talk to your class teacher (K-6) pastoral care teacher (7-10) your House Coordinator 7-10 or another teacher whom you feel comfortable with to discuss your concerns and ask them to help you deal with the problem. A teacher will often be able to give you good ideas on how to cope with it and will help you. You should explain:
 - Who was involved
 - What happened
 - What you did
 - What you believe was unfair or unjust
- You are encouraged to use the **College Complaint Form** at any time, especially at the beginning of seeking help with your complaint. A support person (a parent, family member, a teacher or a friend) can assist you to complete the form.
- Try to stay calm when discussing your problem or concern. Even if you do not feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.
- Work with the teacher or House Coordinator to decide what should be done to help you.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, please make a time to talk to the Coordinator of Pastoral Care K-6 or 7-10 (if a pastoral matter) or the Coordinator of Teaching & Learning K-2, 3-6 or 7-10 (if an academic matter).
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, make an appointment to talk to the College Counsellor or Director of Pastoral Care K-10. These staff members are part of the College Pastoral Care Team and are here to help you.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, please make a time to talk to the Deputy Principal about your concern.
- If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, please make a time to talk to the College Principal about your concern.

Please Remember:

- Sometimes the person helping you will need to speak to someone else so that the problem can be solved. You need to let that person know that you are comfortable about that.
- You can bring a friend, parent or a teacher to support you when you need to talk about the problem.
- No one will be allowed to pick on you or hurt you because you have made a complaint.

2. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.



Note: Complaints about matters within the Sports Program should be undertaken directly by the Coordinator of Sport and subsequently the Director of HPE if unresolved with the Sports Coordinator. The next step in the process moves to the Director of Pastoral Care K-10.

3. STAFF GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

At Dominic College the relationship between colleagues is a very important part of ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. We recognise that all staff need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for the students in our care. Relationships between staff should be professional and in line with the Code of Conduct and the values of the College. All staff have a right to feel safe and supported within their workplace, a principle that is evident within the College's mission and relevant workplace health and safety legislation. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding any other member of the school community, we strongly encourage you to work together to resolve these as promptly and effectively as you can.

What to do if you have a problem:

- Try to identify the problem clearly before taking any action. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the College.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or complaint. This will help in finding a solution.
- In the interests of resolving matters quickly and effectively, you are encouraged to informally discuss your concern or complaint with the person concerned.
- If informal strategies do not resolve the issue, please make arrangements to meet with the Deputy Principal to discuss the matter.
- You are encouraged to use the **College Complaint Form** at any time, especially at the beginning of seeking assistance with your complaint. A support person can assist you to complete the form.
- If after meeting with the Deputy Principal, you still do not feel that the matter has been resolved or if your complaint is about a very serious matter, please refer your complaint to the Principal.
- The College Principal will meet with you. Where the Principal advises, mediation can be arranged between the parties concerned on their mutual agreement.
- A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.
- If meeting with the Principal does not resolve the issue or if your complaint is about a particularly serious or sensitive matter, or involves the Principal, please refer your complaint to the Chairman of the Dominic College Council. Contact details can be obtained through the Principal's Personal Assistant.
- The Chairman of the Dominic College Council will contact you.
- If the matter has still not been resolved after communications with the Chairman of the Dominic College Council, please refer your complaint to the Salesian Provincial, who is chair of the Governing Council. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions such as Workplace Safety, Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Commissions. These might entail some financial cost to you.

Please Note:

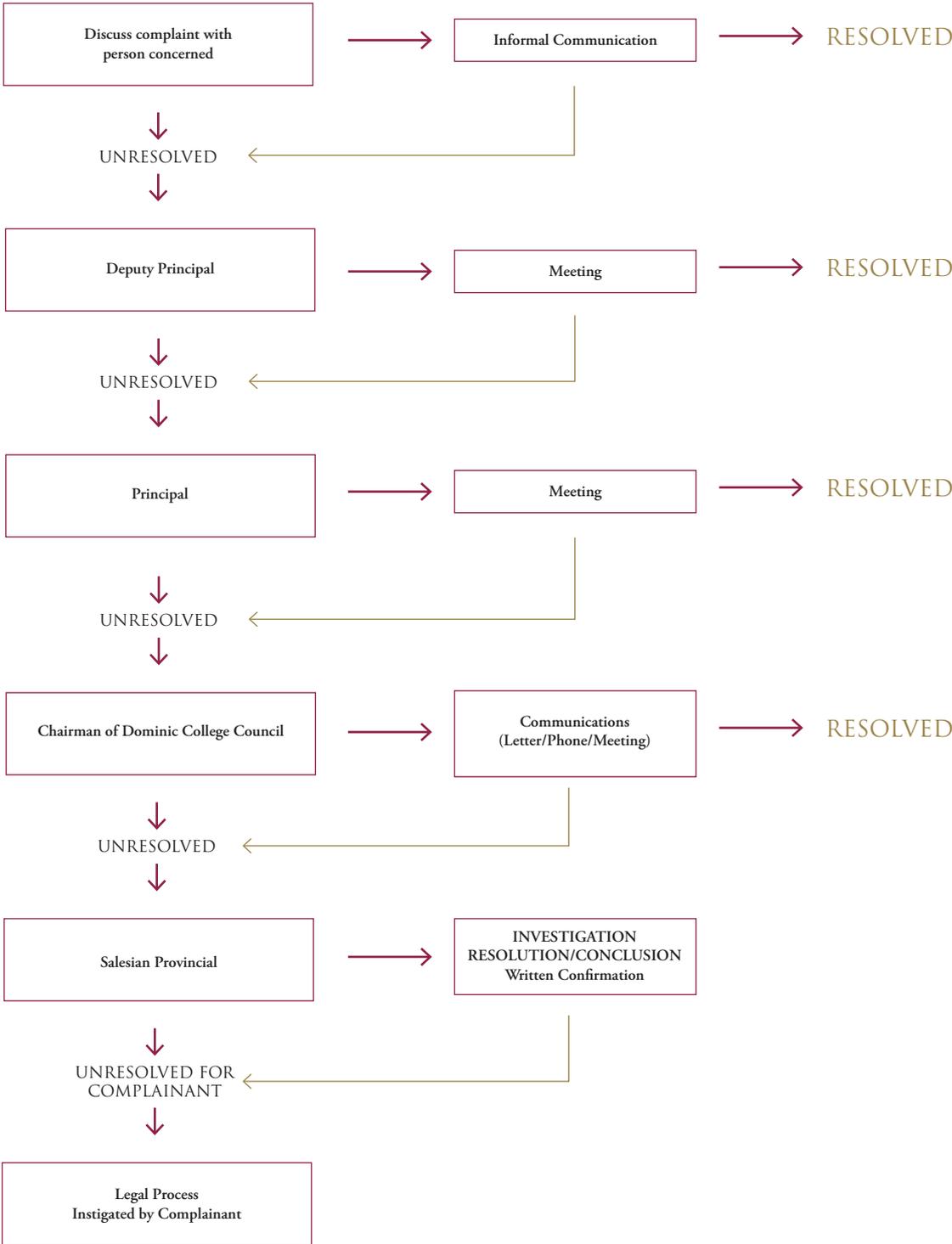
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WHEN YOU DECIDE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT:

- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and will have the right to respond.
- Discussions of complaints are confidential and in keeping with requirements of National Privacy legislation.
- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing. The College Complaint Form can be used if it is helpful.
- All complaints, the actions taken to resolve them and outcomes of those actions will be fully documented.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal should also be in writing.
- No one will be victimised as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
- At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person, for example his/her union, work colleague, friend or other person of his/her choice as a support person.
- A process of mediation is available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions.
- If the matter is resolved by the College a written summary of the resolution will be provided to both parties to the dispute.

3. STAFF GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.



4. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

At Dominic College, we are conscious of our responsibilities as a member of the community. We recognise that our students and staff must represent us well in public and that as a College we must be a responsible and positive contributor to the local and wider community.

If there is an issue causing concern to a member of the public, the College would welcome hearing of it so that the matter can be addressed.

What to do if you have a problem:

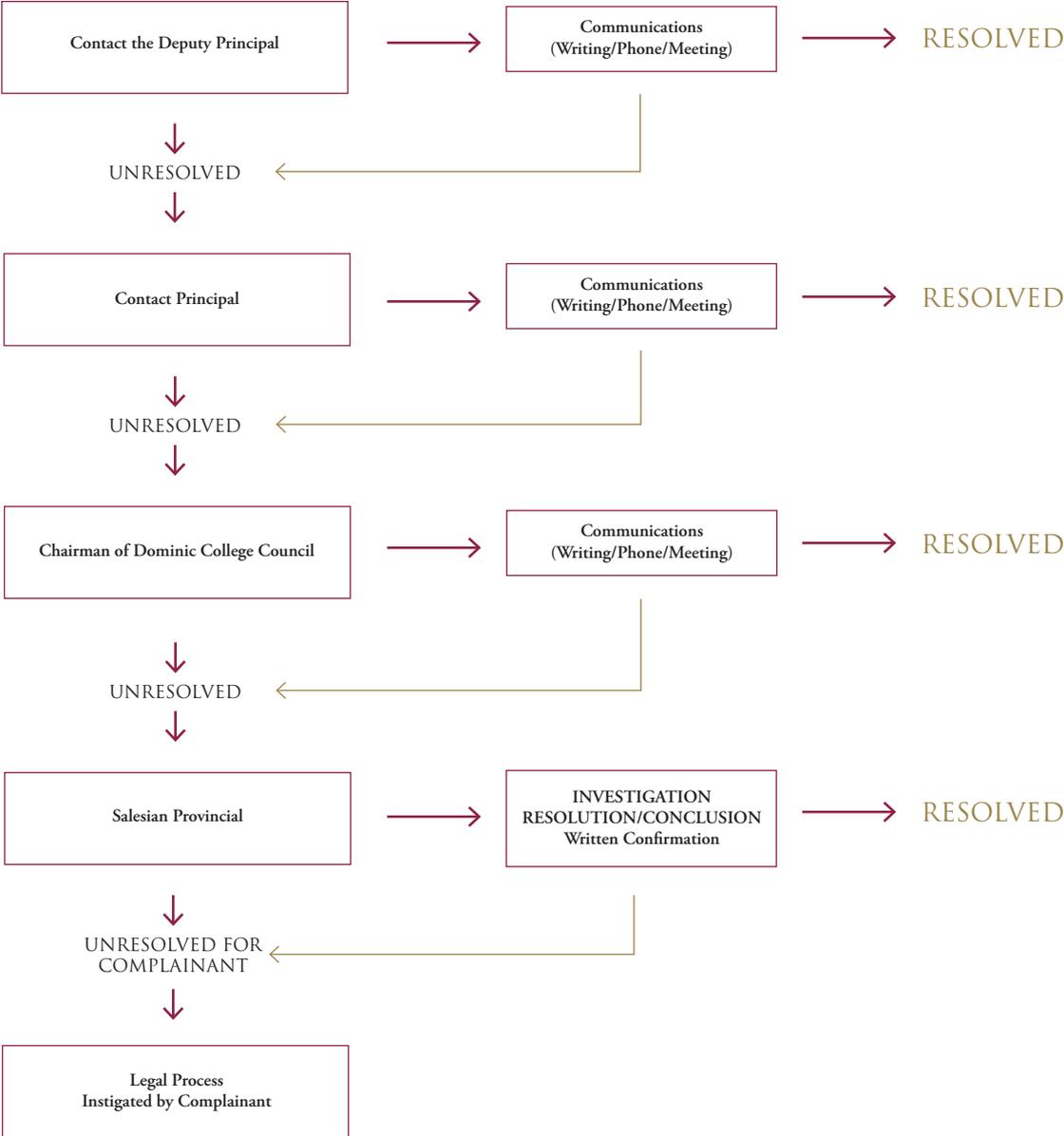
- Contact the College, asking to speak with the Deputy Principal. They will inform the Principal of your concern. On a serious matter you should feel free to contact the Principal directly.
- You are encouraged to use the **College Complaint Form** at any time, especially at the beginning of seeking help with your complaint. A support person (a parent, family member, a teacher or a friend) can assist you to complete the form.
- The Principal may request that you send your complaint in writing.
- If after communications with the Principal, the situation is not resolved, you may contact the Chair of the College Council.
- The Chair of the College Council will contact you regarding your complaint.
- If the matter has still not been resolved after communications with the Chairman of the Dominic College Council, please refer your complaint to the Salesian Provincial, who is chair of the Governing Council. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation or other government commissions as appropriate. This may entail financial cost to you.

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4. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.



5. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL

At Dominic College the relationship between all stakeholders and the Principal is a very important part of ensuring that the College is effectively led and managed. The College Principal has a range of delegated functions and responsibilities given by the owners of Dominic College, the Salesians of Don Bosco.

All stakeholders need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for students and ensure that the overall interests of the College community are maintained. Relationships between the Principal and all stakeholders should be professional, decisions made in accordance with College Policies and in line with the Code of Conduct and the values of the College.

If you have complaints regarding the Principal you are strongly encouraged to work with the Principal with goodwill to resolve these as promptly and effectively as possible.

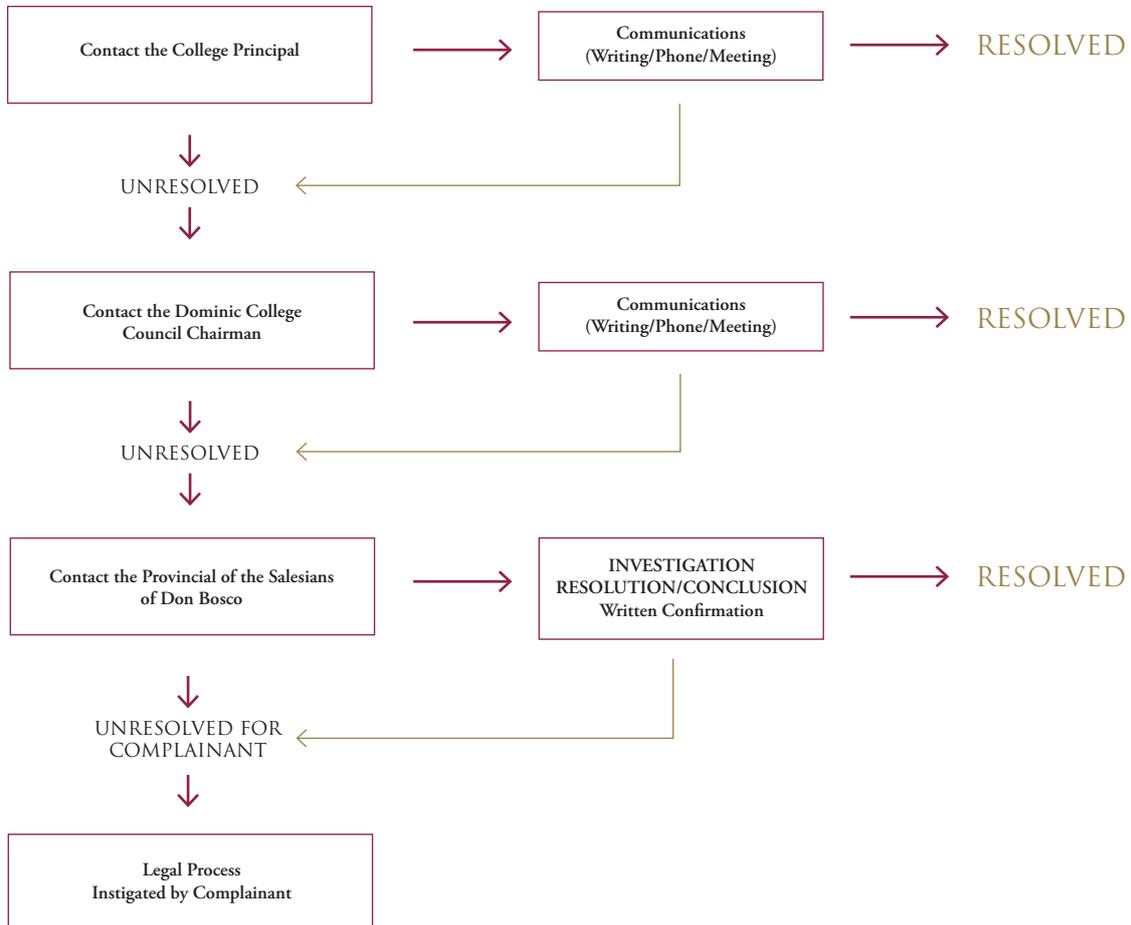
What to do if you have a grievance with the Principal:

- Request a meeting with the Principal to discuss your grievance and you are encouraged to have a support person accompany you.
- You are encouraged to use the College Complaint Form to articulate your complaint or write a letter and provide that to the Principal. A support person can assist you to complete the form.
- You can request the Principal to commence a process of mediation at the outset and an independent mediator will be appointed.
- Mediation can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process either by you or by the Principal.
- If after communications and meeting with the Principal, the situation is not resolved, you may contact the Chair of the College Council.
- The Chair of the College Council may request that you send your complaint in writing.
- The Chair of the College Council will contact you regarding your complaint.
- If the matter has still not been resolved after communications with the Chairman of the Dominic College Council, please refer your complaint to the Salesian Provincial, who is chair of the Governing Council. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
- If matters still remain unresolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation or other government commissions as appropriate. This may entail financial cost to you.

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5. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES: SUMMARY

At the beginning of recognizing a grievance, the College Complaint Form can be used then or at any time. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process upon request.

Student

1. If you feel you can, talk to the person who is upsetting you and tell them to stop.
2. If you cannot do this or if the person does not listen, talk to your parent(s) and/or a teacher you trust and ask them to help you work through the problem.
3. If the problem is still not worked out, talk with your House Coordinator 7-10, Coordinator of Pastoral Care K-6 and 7-10 or Coordinator of Teaching & Learning K-6 and 7-10.
4. If the problem is still not worked out, talk to the College Counsellor, or the Director of Pastoral Care K-10.
5. If the problem is still not worked out, talk to Deputy Principal or the Principal, telling them everything you have done so far and ask for their help.
6. If the problem remains, make an appointment to speak to the Principal about your complaint.
7. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.

Remember: Often parents can help when young people are unsure of what to do. It is a good idea to ask for support and advice when problems arise rather than keep it all to yourself.

Parent, Carer or Guardian

1. Arrange a time through the school office to speak to the person concerned. Remember, if the concern is about your child, the class teacher and pastoral care teacher is the first person you should talk to about the problem.
2. If this does not resolve your concern, make an appointment to discuss it with the Coordinator of Pastoral Care K-6 or 7-10 (if a pastoral matter) or the Coordinator of Teaching & Learning K-6 or 7-10 (if an academic matter).
3. If still unresolved, make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Director of Pastoral Care K-10 (if a pastoral matter) or the Director of Teaching & Learning K-10 (if an academic matter).
4. If still unresolved, make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Deputy Principal.
5. If your concern involves a matter within the Sport Program, you should directly contact the Coordinator of Sport K-6 or 7-10 and if the matter remains unresolved, contact the Deputy Principal.
6. If still unresolved, make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Principal, who may ask you to put your complaint in writing.
7. Only after you have discussed the issue with the Principal, and the issue remains unresolved should you contact the College Council Chair to discuss complaints or concerns with them.
8. If the matter remains unresolved, after communications with the College Council Chair, your complaint should be referred to the Salesian Provincial.
9. Further to this you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, relevant Government commissions or the Ombudsman.

Staff

1. Speak to the person concerned informally and privately.
2. If this does not resolve the issue, make an appointment to take your grievance to the Deputy Principal.
3. If this does not resolve the issue, make an appointment to take your grievance to the Principal.
4. If deemed appropriate, mediation at this stage may be arranged at the mutual agreement of all involved.
5. If still unresolved, or if the complaint involves the Principal, notify the College Council Chair by telephoning or in writing, detailing your grievance and the actions taken so far.
6. If after communications with College Council Chair the matter remains unresolved, your complaint should be referred to the Salesian Provincial. The Salesian Provincial may then appoint an arbitrator for thorough examination of the grievance and related issues.
7. Further to this, you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, relevant Government commissions or the Ombudsman.
8. A process of mediation is available and can be enacted at any time during the grievance resolution process.

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